

Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 1, line 4, with the following rewritten paragraph:

--Reference is made to commonly assigned, co-pending U.S. Patent Applications:

Serial Publication Number [] 2003/0099815 by Dontula et al., (Docket 82056) filed of even date herewith entitled "Ethoxylated Alcohol Intercalated Smectite Materials and Method";

Serial Publication Number [] 2003/0100656 by Majumdar et al. (Docket 82857) filed of even date herewith entitled "Smectite Clay Intercalated with Polyether Block Polyamide Copolymer"; and

Serial Publication Number [] 2003/0100655 by Nair et al., (Docket 82858) filed of even date herewith entitled "Polyester Nanocomposites", the disclosures of which are incorporated herein.--